

## Board of Education Minutes

July 23th, 2025

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held in hybrid format on July 23, 2025 beginning at 6:30 PM. Present were Mrs. Mastroianni, Mrs. Mazzella, Mr. Stefanowicz, Dr. Towle-Weicksel, Mr. Burdick, Mrs. Main, Mrs. Wagner, and Mr. Austin. Also, in attendance were Mr. Hopkins, Superintendent of Schools, Kathy Trammell, Business Manager, Bern Macca, Athletic Director, Randy Rumrill, Director of Facilities and Sustainability Committee guest speakers, Alexis Kahn, and Michael Kennedy.

### **Summary:**

The North Stonington Board of Education held its regular meeting on July 23, 2025, at 6:38 PM, addressing staffing updates, facilities progress, financials, and sustainability initiatives. The superintendent reported on staffing, accreditation, and maintenance schedule status. Technology updates included upcoming smartboard installations and network upgrades. Financial discussions covered end-of-year spending, unresolved tax grievances, and the need to clarify fundraising and scholarship procedures. The board approved new lunch prices and discussed sustainability efforts, including food scrap programs and grant opportunities. Athletics funding was approved for new scoreboards and softball batting cages using the non-lapsing fund, with a focus on reusing existing infrastructure and exploring potential sponsorship opportunities. Policy updates included adopting a new academic dishonesty policy and reviewing AI use in student guidelines. The board also began planning for leadership transitions following the chair's announced resignation, tabled the Student Ambassador program for future discussion, and entered executive session to discuss contract negotiations and superintendent evaluation. The meeting was briefly interrupted but concluded successfully at 10:36 PM.

### **1. Call to Order**

- Mrs. Mastroianni called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM

### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

### **3. Public Comment**

Please be advised that our meeting structure does not allow for two-way dialogue during public Comment, but the Board uses this information to guide their decision-making. Depending on the

topic, they may ask the Superintendent or another District employee to follow up with you. Likewise, public comment might lead to a topic being added to a future meeting agenda.

- No Public Comment

#### **4. Correspondence**

- There was no correspondence.

#### **5. Reports**

##### **a. Superintendent**

- Mr. Hopkins covered staffing updates, the upcoming district accreditation, unforeseen special education expenses, and Smartboard training
- Maintenance projects are ahead of schedule
- Home Depot has agreed to donate a shed and labor (via Deb Dwyer: Cub-Club)

##### **b. BOE Chair – Mrs. Mastroianni**

- Discussed sprinkler system, staffing, and unspent fund concerns.
- Meetings with the town to plan for maintenance responsibility transitions.
  - Next transition meeting scheduled for July 31
- Discussed concerns raised at the Board of Finance meeting July 16<sup>th</sup>
- Announced resignation effective November 5, 2025 (with 2 years left in term).

#### **6. Facilities and Finance**

##### **a. June Financials:**

- Savings from staffing changes and retirement incentive noted
- Issues related to tax penalty and grant funding reimbursement discussed
- Suggestion to review and revise Activities Fund and Scholarship Fund procedures by October.

##### **b. Sprinkler System:**

- Water-Reel is working well, but a new pump may be needed to increase water pressure.
- Discussed the results of the only irrigation bid that was received

**c. End of Year Spending**

- Year-end spending report was reviewed and discussed
- Suggestions were made to improve spending protocols.

**d. Technology Update**

- Wall reinforcements planned for Smartboard installations
- Implementation of multifactor authentication underway
- Camera installation planned
- Twelve new network switches to create three networks: Staff, Students
- Request for a technology inventory recap; including current standing and remaining needs

**7. Policy Review: Academic Dishonesty**

**a. 5143**

**b. 5121.3**

Motion to adopt 5123 from CABE and retire 5143. Motion made by Mr. Stefanowicz and seconded by Mr. Burdick.  
This motion carried by unanimous decision.  
Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

**8. New Business**

**a. School Lunch Account**

- Mandated surplus spending discussed
- State approval required to spend down to \$30,000
- Alexis Kahn and Michael Kennedy (Sustainability Committee)
  - Initiatives: food scrap program, grant-seeking for educational programming and fieldtrips, sustainable serve ware
  - Questions raised regarding share carts and farm-to-table
  - Yellow Farmhouse grant still in processing

**b. Meal Prices**

Motion to raise school lunch prices from \$3.05 to \$3.50 at the elementary school and from \$3.15 to \$3.60 at the middle/high school.  
This motion was made by Mrs. Mazzella and seconded by Mr. Stefanowicz.

This motion carried by unanimous decision.

Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

**c. Athletics**

**i. Facility Usage Policies**

- BOE Policy committee to meet with Athletic Director and Facilities Director to update current Facility Usage Policy

*At this point there was technical difficulty which disrupted the meeting for roughly 10 minutes. The meeting then resumed and continued to be broadcast via Zoom and YouTube.*

**ii. Score Boards**

Motion to approve the purchase and installation of a soccer score board for \$8,902 with a 10% overage for a total of \$9,792.20 and two baseball scoreboards for \$14,088 with a 10% overage for a total of \$15,496.80 to be purchased from non-lapsing and contingent on reuse of the existing posts. This motion made by Mrs. Wagner and seconded by Mr. Burdick.

This motion carried by unanimous decision.

Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

**iii. Batting Cages**

Motion to approve up to \$8,000 for the purchase and installation of a softball batting cage. This motion was made by Dr. Towle-Weicksel and was seconded by Mr. Austin.

This motion carried by unanimous decision.

Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

**9. Old Business**

**a. Student Ambassador**

Motion to table the student ambassador conversation. This motion was made by Mr. Burdick and seconded by Dr. Towle-Weicksel

Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

**10. Consent Agenda**

**a. Approval of Minutes**

**i. 6.16.2025**

Motion to approve the BOE meeting minutes from June 16, 2025. This motion made by Mrs. Main and seconded by Mr. Burdick.  
This motion carried by unanimous decision.  
Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

**b. Move Financial to BOF**

Motion to forward financial reports to BOF. Motion made by Mr. Burdick and seconded by Mrs. Main.  
This motion carried by unanimous decision  
Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

**11. BOE comments for future agenda items**

- Discuss pending board officer changes

**12. Public Comment**

- No public comment

**13. Executive Session**

Motion to enter executive session. Motion made by Mrs. Wagner and seconded by Mr. Burdick.  
Motion carried by unanimous decision.  
Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

**a. Superintendent Evaluation**

**b. Teacher Contract Negotiation**

**14. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Burdick and seconded by Mrs. Main.  
Motion carried by unanimous decision.  
Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0

- Meeting adjourned at 10:36 PM